

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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Madison, Wisconsin -- Erik C. Peterson, United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced that Jesus Duque Pineda, 23, a citizen of Mexico, was sentenced today by Chief U.S. District Judge Barbara B. Crabb to six months in prison for conspiring to possess cocaine with intent to distribute. Pineda pleaded guilty to this charge on November 12, 2008. Pineda will be deported to Mexico after he completes his prison sentence.

Between May 2008 and June 2008, Pineda conspired with others to possess cocaine with intent to distribute in the Watertown area. Pineda's co-defendants Maximo Pineda-Buenaventura, Efrain Pineda-Buenaventura, Servando Herrera-Vazquez, and Perfecto Pineda-Duque have pleaded guilty and are scheduled to be sentenced in January and February. Three of his co-defendants remain fugitives.

Beginning in February 2008, the United States received authority from Judge Crabb to conduct wiretaps on several of the telephones being used by Pineda and his co-defendants to conduct their drug operation. Several hundred calls were monitored by law enforcement officers in which the defendants conducted drug transactions or made arrangements for the delivery of cocaine in the Western District of Wisconsin.

On June 19, 2008, law enforcement officers executed 11 search warrants in the Western and Eastern Districts of Wisconsin, resulting in the arrest of Pineda and his co-defendants, the seizure of over \$100,000 in United States currency, several automobiles, and multiple kilograms of cocaine.

In addition to the arrest of the above-named defendants, police also arrested Arturo Pineda Lopez, Gerardo Pineda-Soria, Juna C. Pineda Pineda, Teodulo Pineda-Buenaventura, Otoniel Mendoza, and Eli Torres-Banos. All of these individuals were indicted by a federal grand jury in a separate conspiracy and have pleaded guilty, with the exception of Pineda-Soria, who is scheduled for trial on March 9, 2009.

The charges against Pineda were the result of an investigation conducted by the Drug Enforcement Administration, Wisconsin Department of Justice, Division of Criminal Investigations-Narcotics Bureau, Dodge County Sheriff's Department, Jefferson County Drug Task Force, Fort Atkinson Police Department, Watertown Police Department, and Janesville Police Department. The prosecution of the case has been handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney Paul W. Connell.

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